

מעשה אבות ... סימן לבנים

ראשית ערסתכם חלה תרימו תרומה בתרומת גרן בן תרימו אתה ... (טו-ז)

When **Rebbetzin Batsheva Kanievsky a”h** used to make *challah* every Thursday afternoon in her little kitchen in *Bnei Brak*, many women would come to watch and join her as she made the dough, said the *beracha* and *davened* for *Klal Yisroel*.

Wiping her hands on her apron, with a wide smile on her face, she welcomed guests with the warmest “*Shalom Aleichem*,” and made them feel like royalty as she offered cold drinks and showered them with heartfelt *berachos*. As a group was escorted by the *Rebbetzin* herself into her tiny kitchen, she would tell individual people to stand near her and answer *amen* to her *berachos*. Then, she would begin. There was absolute silence as the *Rebbetzin* sprinkled some flour onto the dough, then placed her hand under the cover of the huge plastic bowl. She carefully separated a small piece of dough from the mixture and held it aloft for all to see, proclaiming, “This is *challah*.” *Rebbetzin Kanievsky* then loudly made the *beracha* of *hafrashas challah*, and all the women and girls present answered a resounding “*Amen!*”

Still keeping her hand with the piece of *challah* deep inside the bowl, the *Rebbetzin* whispered her special *tefillos* for quite a long time. It seemed like many minutes. Nobody moved or made a sound as they watched her *daven* to *Hashem*. The group just stared, in awe of such *kavanah* and devotion to the *Ribbono shel Olam* while performing a *mitzvah*.

After the *Rebbetzin* finished her *tefillos* for *hafrashas challah*, she began accepting slips of paper, almost like a *Rebbe* accepting *kvitlach*, on which were written names and requests for *berachos* for various *refuos* and *yeshuos*. *Rebbetzin Kanievsky* read each and every name out loud, gave a warm, heartfelt *beracha*, and all together, the women in her presence would shout “*Amen!*” By the time the last name was read, there wasn’t a dry eye in the room. Their faces were literally drenched with tears, so deeply and emotionally ensconced in the *bakashos* of fellow *Yidden* in need. That tiny little kitchen, spilling into the hallway, was like a holy temple. Nobody wanted to leave. They all just wanted to absorb more and more of *Rebbetzin Kanievsky’s* warm and loving presence. She would smile at each woman or girl and wish them a very good *Shabbos*, with *kol tuv*. She heaped *berachos* upon every single *Yid*. It was a memory most will never forget.

The *Rebbetzin* passed away on *Chol HaMoed Sukkos* and her daughter, **Rebbetzin Leah Kolodetsky ybl”c** took over many of the chores and duties from her mother. One of the major things was that she began to make *challah* with women and guests on Thursday afternoon, just as her mother did for so many years. Following the precise manner in which she saw her holy mother do it growing up, to many it was as if a torch had passed, with the flame still burning bright.

A few weeks after she began making *challah* with women, *Rebbetzin Kolodetsky* realized that *Chanukah* was soon approaching and that the Thursday afternoon of *Chanukah* would not be a good time for women to come since they have to be home for *Chanukah licht*. She hung a sign on her door which read, “This Thursday will be *Chanukah* so we will not be doing *hafrashas challah* together. *B’ezeras Hashem*, we will continue again next week.”

That night, the *Rebbetzin* had a dream. Her mother, *Rebbetzin Kanievsky*, came to her and said, “Leah, why did you cancel the *hafrashas challah*? Do you know how much *nachas ruach* it brings to *Hashem* in *shamayim* when you make *challah* with the women?” *Rebbetzin Kolodetsky* woke up and thought to herself, I am sure this dream doesn’t mean anything. It is probably my own guilty feelings for canceling the *challah*. So, she didn’t say anything to anyone and went through her day. However, that night she went to sleep and her mother came again and said the same thing. *Rebbetzin Kanievsky* told her daughter that it is so important to keep having her *hafrashas challah* events as it brings many *zechusim* to people.

After the second dream, *Rebbetzin Kolodetsky* realized this was real. She went to her father, **R’ Chaim ז”l** and told him about her dreams. He told her, “Take down the sign and make *challah* with the women even on *Chanukah*.”

Of course, she listened to the words of her father. Undoubtedly, *Rebbetzin Kolodetsky* hasn’t missed a week since.

תורת הצבי על הפטרות
A PENETRATING ANALYSIS OF THE WEEKLY HAFTORAH BY R’ TZVI HIRSCH HOFFMAN
וישלה יהושע בן נון מן השמים שנחם אנשים כרגלים ... (יהושע ב-א)
The *Haftorah* details the “spy mission” sanctioned by *Yehoshua Bin Nun* prior to entering *Eretz Yisroel*, similar to the mission arranged by *Moshe Rabbeinu* years earlier. With *Moshe*, however, the mission was not met with success; it actually created a lasting detriment for *Klal Yisroel*, to which we are still feeling the repercussions today. Yet, *Yehoshua’s* mission was still undertaken and was even considered “good” by *Hashem*. Furthermore, it’s interesting to note that in contrast, the group sent by *Moshe* succeeded in spying on the land without getting caught while the group sent by *Yehoshua bin Nun* was immediately discovered.

R’ Hershel Bournmiz shlit”a explains that when detailing *Moshe’s* group, the *Torah* writes “למור” - which translates

as “to tour,” whereas when discussing *Yehoshua’s* group, the *Navi* uses the word “מרגל” - which means to spy. The difference between the two groups is quite contrasting. The *meraglim* sent by *Moshe* went with the attitude that they were just going to “tour” the land, a simple sight-seeing mission. But the two *meraglim* sent by *Yehoshua* understood that their mission was to actually spy on the land for *Klal Yisroel’s* benefit and report back. In His infinite mercy, *Hashem* allowed *Moshe’s meraglim* to continue their “mission” up until the last moment before giving their report without getting caught, so as to give them a chance to amend their bleak outlook on the land; the two *meraglim* sent by *Yehoshua* were immediately discovered since they had actually completed their mission right away.

ועשו להם ציצית על כנפי בגדיהם לזרחה ונתנו על ציצית הכנה פתיל תכלת ... (מ-ה)

לעמלו נשמח אבינו מורינו רבינו הרב חיים יוסף בן ר' ישראל אברהם קויפמאן זצ"ל

מחשבת הל"ב

Chazal explain the reason for the blue *techeiles* as follows: תכלת דומה לים וים דומה לרקיע ורקיע לכסא הכבוד. Wearing *techeiles* ultimately reminds us of *Hashem*. The question is why the long elaboration? Just say that *techeiles* reminds us of the הכבוד כסא הכבוד without the metaphoric analogy? One answer I have heard is a person can’t “jump” so fast. He must proceed methodically, in paced stages, in order to get to his proper destination. *Chazal* broke it down to help us picture and actualize the analogy.

In the famous *piyut*, *Shoshanas Yaakov*, we say “בראותם יחד תכלת מרדכ” What was so extraordinary and inspiring about *Mordechai’s techeiles*? Based on the above *machshava* we can say that the *Yidden* in *Shushan* had fallen to a low in *ruchniyus* and could not climb out of it. But when they saw the *techeiles*, the above משל jolted them: indeed, the extrication need not be in one shot. Rung by rung, slow and steady, will get them out of the quagmire. That was the cause for their joy.

Additionally, another *machshava* may be put forth as follows: The *mitzvah* of *tzitzis* is unique in the sense that it is obligatory for a man wearing a four-cornered garment. If he is not wearing such a garment, there is no *tzitzis* requirement. A person technically never has to wear *tzitzis*. Yet, at a time of Heavenly retribution, *Hashem* takes this laxity into account as well. Why? Perhaps this is the crucial lesson. Not all *mitzvos* are black and white. *Hashem* wants to see how we perform in the grey areas as well. Do we have a real connection to Him or are we looking for the easy way out?

In *Shushan*, the *Yidden* went to *Achashveirosh’s* banquet, a party with all the right kosher certifications. Yet, it wasn’t *ratzon Hashem* and they were punished as a result. Seeing the *techeiles* reminded them of this concept and they renewed their commitment, were מקבל התורה מאהבה, and *zoche* to *yeshuos*. וה”ר שיעשה לנו ניסים כמו שעשה לאבותינו בימים ההם בזמן הזה.

משל למה הדבר דומה

מלה נא לעין העם הזה כגדל הסדך ... (ד-ב)

משל: One *Shabbos* morning, as **R’ Levi Yitzchok of Berdichev ז”l**, made his way to *shul*, he met a young Jew who was smoking a cigar in public, in a most bold-faced manner. Surprised, R’ Levi Yitzchok stopped and said: “My son, have you forgotten that today is *Shabbos*?” “No,” answered the young man; “I know that today is *Shabbos*.”

R’ Levi Yitzchok heard this and countered, “Then surely you are not aware that smoking on *Shabbos* is prohibited?”

“No,” the brazen young man answered again. “I know that smoking is prohibited on *Shabbos*.”

“Aha” said the holy *Kedushas Levi*, “I see what the problem is here. Maybe your teeth ache and you think it permissible in such an event to use it as a remedy, even on *Shabbos*?”

“No, I do not need to smoke as a remedy. Nothing is hurting me. I’m perfectly sound and well.”

R’ Levi Yitzchok was nonplused for a minute, but then raised his eyes to the heavens and exclaimed: “*Ribono shel Olam*, what a wonderful people are your children, that even their sinners have some merit left in them! For even such a brazen-faced one as this young man, would rather condemn himself by telling the truth, than hide his sins!”

נמשל: The role of a Jewish leader - and in a sense, of each one of us - is to advocate for our people, not to complain about them. Of course, at the appropriate time and in the appropriate manner, a leader is required to rebuke his people so they will improve. But in speaking to *Hashem*, the leader’s obligation is to pray on their behalf, to only emphasize their virtues and good deeds. There are enough “prosecuting” angels in the heavens, and they don’t need our help! Our focus must instead be directed towards all that is beautiful about the Jewish Nation. To implore *Hashem* that he should shower His beloved people with joy, success and prosperity.

דרגה יתירה

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS ON MIDDOS TOVOS FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF R’ GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHLOMO

When the *Meraglim* (*Spies*) returned after a forty-day visit to the Holy Land, they brought back damaging reports about the people who lived there as well as the integrity of the land. They also brought great calamity upon the Jewish people by causing them to lose all hope of conquering and enjoying the land that *Hashem* chose for them. The people cried uncontrollably over their “misfortune” and as a result, *Hashem* informed them that on this day - the Ninth Day of *Av* - in many future instances, they will truly have what to cry about. As we all know, *Tisha B’av* is a day that was marked for terrible Jewish suffering.

The question that many ask is why? What was so terrible about the report of the spies? In essence they did exactly what *Moshe Rabbeinu* directed them to do. *Moshe* sent them from the desert into the land and gave them explicit instructions. They spied out the land and reported on what they observed. They did not lie. What then did they do wrong?

The *Netziv*, **R’ Naftali Tzvi Yehudah Berlin ז”l** explains that the *meraglim* were considered sinners because discussing the shortcomings of *Eretz Yisroel* is an embarrassment to the KING - *Hashem*, the King of all Kings! They might have reported what they saw, but they should have been more careful. It is very easy to find and point out flaws in others. To some people, it really appears that nothing is ever good, everything is flawed. They are not satisfied with their spouse, their children, their job, their neighbors (their mother in law!). This is a terrible attitude. One should realize that such an outlook is not just negative, it is sinful! This terrible *middah*, besides turning one into a miserable person, actually puts one into the category of *rasha*!

The reason why *Hashem* chose “light” as His first creation, before any other, is so that we should “see the light” so to speak, and illuminate every person in our lives with the glow of positivity and appreciation. This attitude will not only allow us to be truly joyous - עבדו את ה' בשמחה - but will put us into the category of *Tzaddikim*, for this is the mark of a truly righteous person.